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Governor Scott Walker  
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Division of Milwaukee Child  
Protective Services (DMCPS)

**DATE: January 31, 2018**

**TO: DMCPS, CHWCS, SaintA, Professional Services Group, Lad Lake**

**FROM: Robin Joseph, Division Administrator  
Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services**

**RE: Voluntary Transition to Independent Living Agreement (VTILA)**

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This memo is to clarify the specific procedures used by the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) and DMCPS contracted agencies when a child, age 18 to 21, wishes to continue in care or re-enter out-of-home care (OHC) utilizing the Voluntary Transition to Independent Living Agreement (VTILA). Completing the VTILA allows DMCPS to identify OHC provider based on the child's needs, including the following type of OHC providers: foster care, group home, supervised independent living, residential care center, or in the home of a (non-parent) relative.

### **Background**

On September 18, 2014, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (H.R. 4980) was enacted. This bill includes many provisions regarding independent living services for youth age 14 and older. Youth are able to remain in care until age 21 based on certain eligibility requirements ([Wisc. Stats. §48.366\(3\)](#) and [DSP memo 2016-02](#)), including being enrolled and attending secondary school and having an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Youth also have the opportunity to re-enter out-of-home care after they have exited the child welfare system after the age of 18, if they meet eligibility requirements under the VTILA.

### **Procedure**

1. If a youth age 18 to 21 expresses interest in re-entering out-of-home care after exiting the child welfare system, the DMCPS Independent Living coordinator, Transition Resource Agency, or previous Ongoing Agency must help the youth complete the VTILA. The VTILA is located on the [DCF Forms Page](#) and in eWiSACWIS under the youth's Independent Living page.
2. The agency who assisted the youth with the VTILA must call the DMCPS Access (220-SAFE) to make a Services Report under that child's previous Case Head.
  - a. The case *should not* be opened under the youth directly, but under the youth's previous casehead.
  - b. The agency must email the VTILA to the Access Initial Assessment specialist, who received the call and DMCPS Ongoing Services Section (OSS) at [DCFDMCPSHLOCRquest@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFDMCPSHLOCRquest@wisconsin.gov).
3. DMCPS Access must open and complete a new Services Report, and include the VTILA.

- a. The Access Initial Assessment specialist must use the following format when writing the report:
  - i. Narrative: *"Youth name" is opting to return to care under the Voluntary Transition to Independent Living Agreement (VTILA) and signed the Agreement on "date" at "time." Placement for the youth is needed today.*
  - ii. Service Report type: Re-Entry into Out-of-Home Care
  - iii. Decision: Must be a "Screen In" decision. Explanation should state: *Request to Re-Enter Out-of-Home Care through a Voluntary Transition to Independent Living Agreement. Case was previously serviced by "Agency".*
4. When the DMCPs Access supervisor approves the Services Report the following format must be used:
  - i. Decision: Must be a "Screen In" decision. Explanation should state: *Request for Voluntary Transition to Independent Living Agreement. Case was previously serviced by "Agency".*
5. DMCPs Access supervisor must call Professional Services Group (PSG) Placement Referral Unit (PRU) to alert that the youth is in need of placement. DMCPs Access will also send the VTILA via email to PSG PRU and the DMCPs Ongoing Services Section (OSS) at [DCFDMCPSHLOCRequest@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFDMCPSHLOCRequest@wisconsin.gov).
6. The youth is automatically approved for a higher level of care (HLOC) for foster care Level of Care 3 or 4 or group home. Within 48 hours of placement, the Contracted Ongoing Agency must send the HLOC Request form to the DMCPs OSS ([DCFDMCPSHLOCRequest@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFDMCPSHLOCRequest@wisconsin.gov)).
7. PSG PRU must take the referral from DMCPs Access and complete an intake placement packet for the youth.
8. PSG PRU must send the completed intake packet and VTILA to the appropriate Placement Unit at the Contracted Ongoing Agency.
9. The Contracted Ongoing Agency will assign the case and determine placement.
10. The Contracted Ongoing Agency must place the youth on the same date the VTILA is signed by the DMCPs (Wisc. Statute [DCF §21.06](#)).
11. DMCPs OSS tracks and uploads all VTILA's to the youth's Independent Living page. OSS is also responsible for coordinating with the Ongoing case manager and the Office of Legal Counsel to petition the court to continue the youth's out-of-home care placement within 150 days of the youth entering into the VTILA.

Attachments:

- [DCF-F-5030-E Form: Voluntary Transition to Independent Living](#)
- [DMCPs 2017-03 Memo](#): Higher Level of Care (HLOC)
- [DMCPs Policy](#) IA 32.00, OCM 1.00: Case Transition Policy
- [DCF Memo 2016-02](#): 2015 WI Act 128 Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangements (OPPLA) and Independent Living Series